



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
REPORT

Tuesday 11 June 2024
Wednesday 12 June 2024
Thursday 13 June 2024
Monday 17 June 2024
Tuesday 18 June 2024
Wednesday 19 June 2024
Thursday 20 June 2024

The Estimates Committee examined the estimates of proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 2024-2025 and the Statements of Corporate Intent 2024-2025 for the Power and Water Corporation, Jacana Energy and Territory Generation. Questions were raised by some Members on the following issues:

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Chief Minister (Independent Officers)	<p><i>Auditor-General</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to Cabinet documents and impact on Auditor-General's reports• Cost benefit analysis for Ship Lift project• Resourcing of Auditor-General's Office• Presentation of reports to Cabinet in other jurisdictions• Ongoing issues with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education <p><i>NT Electoral Commission</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication of changes to voting centres• Safeguards in place to ensure people cannot vote twice• NTEC office in Alice Springs for 2024 Territory General Election• Returns regarding electoral expenditure• Soliciting of campaign donations• Ministerial travel to remote polling centres during caretaker period <p><i>Acting ICAC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of second report regarding Jupiter report delayed• Number of staff in ICAC Office and resourcing constraints• Impact of staffing vacancies on investigations and reports• Additional funding in 2024-25• Use of external counsel in investigations• Expenditure on external consultants for reporting period• ICAC Inspector's investigation into allegations related to the ICAC• ICAC Inspector's report and publication of summary of report• Impact of Commissioner's absence on investigations and OICAC

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
<p>Chief Minister (Independent Officers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of referrals received in reporting period • OICAC staff wellbeing <p><i>Ombudsman</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of FOIs received in reporting period and number of complaints received about the FOI process • Clarification of reduction in funding for Ombudsman’s Office
<p>Chief Minister</p> <p>Major Projects</p> <p>Defence Industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of crime to the Northern Territory • Budget for public order and safety • PALs on bottle shops • Minimum mandatory sentencing for domestic violence offences • Assault numbers on public servants in the reporting period • Review of racism in the NT Police Service • Review of conflicts of interest mechanisms • Cost of international ministerial travel • Territory economy • CommSec data • Cost of living pressures • Private investment levels • Major projects delivered by the NT Government • Effect of population growth on the economy and budget • Stretch targets • Middle Arm development project • Budget allocated to Treaty • Location of Territory Day fireworks 2024 • Legal services expenditure • Total cost of marketing and communications
<p>Treasurer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs associated with promotion of the Budget • State of the Territory economy • Strategies to increase housing stock • Strategies to assist first home buyers • Business investment in defence industries • Expenditure on crime, anti-social behaviour and community safety • Capacity to reach 2030 economic target • Population growth required to meet 300,000 target • Net debt and associated repayment strategy • Implementation of Langoulant Budget Repair Review recommendations • Interest repayments on debt • Accuracy of forward estimates • Impact of policy changes on forward estimates • Return to surplus projections • Current efficiency dividend • Treasurer’s Advances for legal costs

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue from motor vehicle registrations • Electric vehicle registration incentives • Home ownership incentives • Eni licence fees for solar farms
Territory Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Larrakia regarding Middle Arm development • Remit of Infrastructure NT
Industry and Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeframes for gaming machine operator licensing applications • Business interest in liquor licence buy back scheme
Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty Local Government Arts, Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministerial travel to Lajamanu • Treaty budget and expenditure – process and consultants • Funding pool for Treaty grants • Budget for implementation of Closing the Gap (CtG) agreement • Implementation of Productivity Commission report recommendations regarding CtG • Place based partnership project • Virtual funding project for CtG priority reform areas • Reasons for delay of CtG Annual Report • Development and implementation of CtG online training module • Funding allocated to Aboriginal Interpreter Service • Location and number of staff in Aboriginal Interpreter Service • Impact of vacancies on provision of interpreter services • Capacity to meet demand for interpreter services • Local government unit funding • Staffing of local government unit • Breakdown of local government grants • Funding for and purpose of Immediate Priority grants • Budget and review for Local Authority projects • Rollover of unspent Local Authority funding • Local Authority meetings and decision-making • Remedies for non-compliance with minimum requirements for local government meetings • Expenditure regarding complaints about Barkly Regional Council • Management and operations of Barkly Regional Council • Current investigations of regional councils • Official Manager remuneration and entitlements • Justitia Report terms of reference • Number of vacancies in the local government unit • Number of grants allocated to local government authorities • Appointment of official managers for councils under investigation • Municipal and Essential Service grants to Binjari • Number of councils receiving grants for municipal services • Funding for Belyuen Council • Proposed changes to Litchfield Shire boundaries

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty Local Government Arts, Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process regarding changes to local government boundaries • Operational grants for Law and Order Justice Groups • Guidelines for the establishment and membership of Law and Order Justice Groups • Consultants engaged to establish Law and Order Justice Groups • Alice Springs Art Gallery
Attorney-General and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for legal services and associated performance requirements • Commonwealth legal funding • Number of victims of crimes applications • Delays in processing victims of crimes applications • Programs funded through Victims of Crime NT and their eligibility criteria • Published crime statistics and their source • Signatories to the Aboriginal Justice Agreement • Funding to deliver the Aboriginal Justice Agreement in 2024-25 • Alternatives to custody facilities under the Aboriginal Justice Agreement • Number of agency reviews of systemic racism undertaken • Consultation and tender for non-custodial facility in Central Australia • Plans to build a new women's prison • Rectification works payment from damage at Darwin Correctional Centre in May 2020 • Number of people incarcerated in the NT • Confinement and discipline practices in correctional facilities • Heat mitigation in correctional facilities • Number of matters brought before the Parole Board and number of prisoners granted release • Breaches of parole • Number of adults: on bail; refused bail; charged with a breach of bail; or charged with a serious violent offence while on bail during the reporting period • Average time people spend on remand • Authenticity certificates and WorkSafe clearances required for exclusion zones • Audit of qualifications held by staff in the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice
Arts, Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esplanade heritage listing • Sacred site issues impacting on use of Mindil Beach for Territory Day fireworks • Requirements for authority certificates

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Local Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure on Local Decision Making (LDM) across government • Cost of consultants and staffing resources involved in LDM • Operational budget for LDM • Julalikari LDM agreement progress • Implementation of Barkly Regional Deal • Implementation of Youth Justice facility in Tennant Creek • Government investment and system services reform initiative • Review of Barkly Regional Deal • Application of LDM model to environmental issues and water allocation decisions • Number of full time positions funded under LDM • Full-time LDM positions in Yolngu-speaking areas • LDM agreements in the Mulka electorate • Assistance provided to transition services to First Nations peoples
Public Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of enterprise agreements completed in reporting period • Number of enterprise agreement negotiations awaiting approval from Fair Work • Implementation of Fair Work Commission determination regarding firefighters • Cost of external legal representation regarding Fair Work Commission matter relating to firefighters • Audit of overtime practices in Fire and Rescue Services • People Matter Survey response plan • Current number of NT public servants • Number of public servants assaulted or subject to criminal behaviour at work • Employment separation, turnover rates and resignations • Aboriginal language training for frontline employees • Aboriginal employment rate in NTPS • Special Measures employment and grievances
Remote Housing and Homelands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of repairs to remote housing due to criminal damage • Strategies to reduce criminal damage to remote housing and recoup cost • Digital dwelling inspection reporting system • Number of properties damaged in reporting period • Delays to building new homes due to safety concerns in community • Remote housing repairs and maintenance contracts • Tangentyere Council housing management in Alice Springs Town Camps Alice Springs Town Camps road funding • Ministerial travel from Katherine to Ngukurr • Evictions from remote housing • Vacancies in government employee housing in Elliott

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Remote Housing and Homelands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote housing program and road development in Borroloola • Remote Housing Work Program • Outstanding rent in remote and homeland communities • Housing and subdivision design in remote communities • Current overcrowding rates in Yirrkala, Ramingining, Galiwinku, Milingimbi and Gapuwiyak • Property ownership on homelands • Complaints and evictions relating to anti-social behaviour in remote communities • Inclusion of homelands housing in Remote Housing Partnership Agreement • Government employee housing in communities in East Arnhem • Distinction between homelands and outstations and impact on funding for remote housing • Role of Housing Reference Groups and review of how they operate in relation to allocation of housing • Funding strategies for new housing on homelands
Health Mental Health and Suicide Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDH operational capacity and challenges • Instances of Code Yellows in other jurisdictions • Strategies to manage demand on NT hospitals • Commonwealth funding for aged care facilities in the NT • Lack of aged care facilities and impact on hospital beds • Delays in delivery of aged care beds and facilities • Health budget reduction from 2023-24 to 2024-45 • Security costs for NT Health facilities • Relocation of the Flynn Drive renal dialysis unit • Drinking Water Quality Monitoring Program • Key performance indicators regarding rheumatic heart disease • Number of Territorians receiving renal dialysis treatment • Kidney disease prevention strategies • Number of people currently on the Banned Drinkers Register • Number of banned drinker orders issued • Alcohol rehabilitation services available 'on country' • Relocation of the Integrated Withdrawal Service in Alice Springs • Volatile substance abuse • Variation in mental health budget and access to services • Funding to mental health peer support programs • Current separation rate of staff in remote health facilities • Number and cost of agency staff covering vacancies in remote health facilities • Aeromedical retrieval services and accessibility of homelands
Renewables and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of electricity generated by renewables • Solar power farms at Manton Dam and Batchelor • Funding for electricity market reforms • Large scale renewable electricity generators

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
<p>Renewables and Energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance testing for renewable electricity generation • Expenditure on electricity market reform • Development of renewable hydrogen project • Capacity of DK BESS 1 and DK BESS 2 projects • Development of Renewable Energy Hub • Implementation of generation performance standards • Budget for Office of Sustainable Energy • Alice Springs Future Grid Project • Virtual power plants • Alice Springs Regulated Electricity System Plan • Implementation of renewable energy systems in remote communities • Outcome of Gateway Review Report • Legal challenges regarding solar farms • Funding for emissions reduction, home and business battery scheme and sustainable energy programs • Electrical system blackouts in Alice Springs • Alice Springs Roadmap to 2030 report and its implementation • Stakeholder meetings • Remote communities receiving renewable energy sources • NT Fleet electric vehicles • Energy market taskforce (EMIRT) • Restrictions on large-scale producers of energy into the Tennant Creek and Alice Springs markets • Public and private procurement options for energy
<p>Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence</p> <p>Essential Services</p> <p>Sport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of domestic violence in the Northern Territory • Homicide rates in the NT • Comparison of domestic violence rates to other jurisdictions • Deaths resulting from domestic violence • Strategies to address incidence of domestic violence • Men's behaviour change programs and funding evaluation • Number of court ordered and voluntary participants in men's behaviour change programs • Domestic violence offenders on bail • Support mechanisms in place for domestic, family and sexual violence offenders on leaving prison • Domestic, family and sexual violence programs in Katherine and Big Rivers region. Adequacy of funding for organisations providing domestic, family and sexual violence programs in the Northern Territory • Accommodation of victims of domestic, family and sexual violence • Infrastructure funding for women's crisis centres • Katherine Women's Crisis Centre staffing • Use of motels when women's crisis centres are at capacity

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
<p data-bbox="248 622 496 770">Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence</p> <p data-bbox="304 853 437 920">Essential Services</p> <p data-bbox="331 1003 410 1037">Sport</p>	<ul data-bbox="528 241 1433 1422" style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of beds for victims of domestic, family and sexual violence across the Northern Territory • Educational programs for perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence • Domestic and family violence rates in Alice Springs • Provision of domestic and family violence services in Aboriginal communities • Consideration of domestic violence in the development of alcohol management plans for Aboriginal communities • Agency and service provider input into community alcohol management plans • Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Interagency Coordination and Reform Office • Reasons for carry overs of funding from previous financial year • Repairs and maintenance to domestic violence shelters • Grants provided under Action Plan 2 • Staffing in sport and active recreation branch • Grants provided to sporting bodies • Darwin Salties Basketball • Future AFL club for the Northern Territory • Grassroots grants program • Outstanding grant acquittals • Sports and learn to swim vouchers • Budget for remote sports vouchers • Unallocated funds for the sports vouchers scheme • Upgrade and use of Richardson Park • Anzac Oval redevelopment • Upgrade of Jim McConville and Kilgariff ovals • Upgrades to remote community sports facilities • Development of motor sports track in Katherine
<p data-bbox="256 1630 485 1778">Environment, Climate Change and Water Security</p>	<ul data-bbox="528 1440 1433 1977" style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the Environmental Defenders Office • Environmental Defenders Office processes • Cabinet decisions on fracking moratorium • Budget for Bushfires NT • Staffing of Bushfires NT and surge capacity for fire season • Fatigue management during bushfire season • Interstate assistance to respond to bushfires • Type of assistance requested by NT Cattleman's Association during bushfire season • Decommissioning of VHF towers • Expenditure on Pastoralist Reimbursement program • Number of volunteers involved in responding to Barkly bushfire emergency • Costs associated with the Barkly bushfire emergency

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Environment, Climate Change and Water Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beetaloo Basin – hydraulic fracturing • Strategies to address impact of rising sea level on remote communities • Addressing marine pollution washing up on NT beaches • Number of gamba grass enforcement orders and infringements issued • Complaints received regarding gamba grass • Strategies to control gamba grass on government land
Alcohol Policy Veterans' Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on PALIs in bottle shops • Budget for Alcohol Policy coordination • Alcohol Policy unit staffing • Cost of crime and impact in relation to alcohol policy • Cost of three year Liquor Act Review • Review of minimum floor price initiative and success • Budget for community alcohol plans • Implementation of Riley Review recommendations • Number of community alcohol management plans currently in place • Timeframes to develop and approve alcohol management plans • Tender process to engage consultants to develop alcohol management plans • Gove Peninsula liquor permit trial evaluation and extension • Liquor licence buy back scheme • Expenditure on initiatives to curb secondary supply • Search, seize and destroy powers • Number of de-escalation courses provided • Roll out of OC spray • Changes to liquor permit at Wadeye • Veterans' confidence in the Minister for Veterans' Affairs • Training of doctors through Operation Thrive and cost including staff • Operation Thrive budget for 2024-25 • Defence Veterans Strategy employment targets
Major Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision to relocate Territory Day Fireworks from Mindil Beach to the Darwin Waterfront • Consultation regarding relocation of Territory Day Fireworks • Role of Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade and NT Major Events Company in decision-making regarding location of Territory Day Fireworks • Expenditure on Masters Games • Guarantee that the Masters Games will be hosted in Alice Springs in 2024 • Flags flown at Supercars
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and commercial property unlawful entries statistics • Number of stolen vehicles statistics

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
<p style="text-align: center;">Police</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakdown of aggravated assault charges • Differences in data entry between SerPro and PROMIS • Challenges with year-on-year data comparisons due to changeover from PROMIS to SerPro • Number of 000 and 131444 calls over the reporting period • Joint Emergency Services Communication Centre (JESCC) • Average wait time for 000 calls and longest call wait time • Number of 000 calls unanswered; rang out; diverted interstate • Recruitment of additional 25 staff to the JESCC • NT Police racism review by the Anti-Discrimination Commission, funding and terms of reference • Evidence to the Kumanjayi Walker coronial inquest regarding racism within NT Police • Retrospectivity of racism review • Aboriginal Justice Unit review into racism within NT agencies • Necessity of multiple reviews into racism within NT Police • ICAC investigation into the TRG and status • Police resources allocated to racism reviews into NT Police • Police resources allocated to ICAC investigation into the TRG • Police Association survey responses regarding adequacy of resources and low morale • Reform to NT Police disciplinary system • Police separation statistics by dismissal, retirement and resignation • Number of police on long term personal leave • Expenditure on overtime • Arrests made during the Alice Springs youth curfew • Definition and process for assessing of 'responsible adult' in respect to the care of children • Allegations of racism against Police Commissioner, omission during press conference and potentially misleading evidence provided by police in the Walker coronial inquest • Total cost of Walker coronial inquest • Resourcing to respond to domestic and family violence • Proportion of domestic and family violence as a proportion of all crimes • Alcohol as a factor in domestic and family violence • Charges for criminal damage at Howard Springs facility • Charges for domestic violence at Howard Springs facility • Number of assaults on police and category of offence • Police seeking treatment from assaults • Number of people charged for assaults on police • Number of successful prosecutions for assaults on police • Number of police cars stolen and/or rammed • Number of vehicles stolen from police premises and compounds

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prisoners held in police watch houses and associated resources • Timeframe for cessation of prisoners in police watch houses • Number of youth and adults granted police bail • Number of verbal and written warnings issued to youth by police • Number of youth diverted after apprehension by police • Number of youth and adults on bail fitted with electronic monitoring devices • Number of youth not diverted that proceeded to court • Number of adults and youth apprehended while on bail • Location of where people are taken after being picked up by police • Expenditure to upgrade security at police stations • Proportions of budget allocated to NT Fire and Emergency Services following separation with NT Police
Fire and Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on PFES separation process • Shared services between Fire and Emergency Services and NT Police • Fire stations without NT full time staff • Outsourcing of hazard reduction burns • Management of hazard reduction burns on government land • Full time firefighter vacancies • Recruitment of Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner Fire and Emergency Services organisational structure • Maintaining balance between executive and frontline officers • Number of assaults on firefighters • Number of firefighters on work related injury leave • Replacement of firefighting assets • 2022-23 overtime audit cost
Territory Families Urban Housing Youth, Seniors and Equality Multicultural Affairs Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents at Alice Springs Youth Justice Centre • Expenditure on upgrades to Alice Springs Youth Justice Centre • Charges in relation to damaged caused to Youth Justice Centres • Number of children deemed to be 'at risk' and 'at high risk' • Federal funding for family support programs • Number of young people being case managed across the NT • Number and workload of case managers across the NT • Co-responder model • Youth outreach and engagement officers • Use of safe sleeping spaces across the NT • Foster Care statistics • Number of children transitioned from foster care to kinship care • Strategies to prevent harm to children in the community • Capacity of Alice Springs Back on Track Program • Costs incurred by Territory Families of Alice Springs youth curfew to Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities • Difficulties recruiting child protection staff • Family Responsibility Agreements statistics

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
<p>Territory Families</p> <p>Urban Housing</p> <p>Youth, Seniors and Equality</p> <p>Multicultural Affairs</p> <p>Disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Safety Plans • Improved family support services • Country Connect Program • Child protection notification statistics • Number of young people in out of home care • Barkly Youth Justice facility • Youth Justice System Review • Transfer of young people from Alice Springs to Darwin youth justice facilities • Number of young people fitted with an electronic monitoring device during the reporting period • Victim-offender conferencing • Seven Emu Station Camp for young people operations • Overtime costs related to youth riots • Youth outreach re-engagement • Alice Springs youth justice facility and staffing • Youth justice worker positions and vacancies • Safe places for young people under the Barkly Regional Deal • Homelessness in the NT and funds spent on it Federal government housing funding • Yilli Housing short stay accommodation repair and maintenance costs • Alice Springs visitor park expansion and capacity • Public housing key performance indicators • Urban public housing wait times • Strategies to address vacancy turnaround times • Housing strategy investment and handover • Public housing safety officer inspections and budget • Reports of elder abuse and their causes • Expenditure, staffing and operational budget for multicultural affairs • Multicultural grants • Ministerial advisory committee for multicultural affairs • NT contribution to NDIS scheme • NDIS support provided to Territory Families clients • Aboriginal-owned NDIS providers in the NT
<p>Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions implemented in relation to budget repair • Agency staffing • Industry satisfaction with agency performance • Post occupancy evaluations undertaken in reporting period • Tender process and achieving value for money • Road infrastructure upgrade budget • Budget for Mereenie Loop Tourist Drive • Sealing of Santa Teresa road • Whole of government repairs and maintenance initiative

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
<p>Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Government funding for roads • Infrastructure projects in Alice Springs • Alice Springs and Darwin Youth Justice facilities • Expenditure on repairs and maintenance of the current youth justice facility in Darwin during the reporting period • Coolalinga/Stuart Highway upgrade • Damage to the road near Elliott • Uncertified government buildings without certificates of occupancy • Rectification works at TIO Stadium to meet compliance requirements including fire hydrant system upgrades at TIO Stadium • Building certificates of occupancy and exemptions process • Rectification works to Alice Springs Hospital • Civil infrastructure tenders and seasonal conditions • Planning infrastructure projects to account for seasonal conditions • Procurement processes • Availability of materials for civil contractors • Action taken to address recommendations from the ICAC Report into the Katherine DIPL Office • Response to ICAC Report regarding agency staff qualifications • Infrastructure upgrades to government schools • Tennant Creek health staff accommodation • State Square revitalisation project • Budget and timeframes for Liberty Square project • Budget and timeframes for State Square Art Gallery project • Cavenagh Street shade structure repairs and maintenance expenditure • Tiger Brennan overpass total budget and expenditure • Tanami Road total budget and expenditure • ATSI Art Gallery of Australia • Federal funding allocation for housing • Construction costs of residential youth justice facilities in Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs • Construction of Katherine Agribusiness hub • Expenditure of federal funding for housing in Alice Springs • KPMG report regarding Building Commissioner • Assaults on transit safety officers in reporting period • Monitoring of cameras on public buses • Safety of taxi drivers and damage to taxis in Alice Springs • Average wait time at Motor Vehicle Registries • Damage to sacred sites in Arlparra • Expenditure on legal costs in the reporting period • Motor vehicle registration increases • Overview of the strategic planning work of the NT Planning Commission

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
<p>Business and Jobs</p> <p>Skills, Training and International Education</p> <p>Tourism and Hospitality</p> <p>Recreational Fishing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational Fishing Futures Program • Budget for phasing out of gill netting • Challenges for the NT tourism industry • Impact of crime on business and tourism • Territory Aviation Attraction Scheme • Payments to Bonza Airlines • Business closures in reporting period • Business closures in Alice Springs • Small Business Champions program • Seafood and Maritime Industries Training • Business Secure and Resilience Program
<p>Agribusiness and Fisheries</p> <p>Mining</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with land councils relating to recreational and commercial fishing • Mini Mini fishing areas • Management and surveillance of mango twig tip dieback • Katherine agribusiness hub • Jackfruit production in the NT • Change in value of the Territory's agriculture and fisheries production goal • Agribusiness strategy and recent development • Development of agribusiness precincts • Progress of the barramundi fishing review • Biosecurity footbaths at international terminals • Management of banana freckle • Detention of FMD and lumpy skin disease • Animal welfare officer positions • Animal welfare reports and investigations • Animals seized and euthanised due to welfare concerns, and prosecutions • Recipients of geophysics and drilling collaboration grants • Resourcing the Territory program, funding and grants • Core Lithium project activities, financial support and royalties • Infrastructure upgrades to support mining in Tennant Creek • Arafura Nolans Rare Earths project and Amaroo Phosphate project • Fraser Institute's annual mining survey and the NT's rank • Mining remediation fund expenditure, length of operation, audit and levy • Mine remediation works in Tennant Creek and their costs • Number of legacy mines across the Northern Territory • Granting of licences on native title-affected pastoral lands, time frames and key performance indicators • Assessment and approval for grant of mining licences and management plans • Number and regional locations of mining management plans

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top End Energy McArthur Basin exploration • Government role in support and engagement related to exploration licences • Number of and time frames for processing mining exploration permit applications • Exploration permits involving horizontal fracturing, and requirements to identify methods of exploration • Exploration permits involving horizontal fracturing, requirements to identify methods of exploration, and environmental regulation permits • Gas flow in the Beetaloo Sub Basin
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for On Country Learning Measure • Central Australia Plan funding • Aboriginal student enrolments • Pre-school funding model • NAPLAN performance measures • Anti-social behaviour in schools • Enrolment based funding • Education grants and subsidies • Early childhood learning centres • Breakdown of child care subsidies provided by NT Government • Back to School voucher scheme • Security at government schools • Costs associated with use of helicopters to transport teaching staff in flood affected areas • Closure of remote homeland schools in Barkly region • Teacher vacancies in primary schools in Barkly region • Recruitment process for school principals • Critical incidents and assaults in primary schools during the reporting period • Number of school counsellor positions, vacancies and retention rates • Allied Health professionals supporting schools • Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports in schools • Wellbeing officers in schools • Use of therapy dogs in schools • School based police officer program • Number of secondary students currently enrolled in vocational education and training courses • Voluntary fees and contributions • Review of secondary education • Funding provided to independent schools • Incidence and cost of property damage to schools

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
<p>Power and Water Corporation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Tip gas field supply and alternate gas resources for the Northern Territory • Capacity to meet contractual obligations regarding supply of gas • Impact of gas curtailment including costs • Total cost of fuels for power generation • Net debt, net profit and total liabilities • Capacity of and dispatch from solar farms • Spinning reserve required for security of electricity system • Alice Springs Future Grid project and Road Map Report • Basis for projected increase in gas supply and associated revenue • Number of additional Eni gas wells drilled to increase supply • Arbitration proceedings between PWC and Eni • Roll out of smart meters • Expenditure on Manton Dam return to service project to date • Projected timeframe for construction and completion of AROWS Project • Number of PWC board members residing in the Northern Territory • Number and level of FTEs, consultants and labour hire employees • Staff retention rates per annum • Impact of move to renewables on FTE levels • Number of employees and contractors working from interstate • Number of apprentices working for Power and Water and number of new apprentices taken on in reporting period • Expenditure on consultants and labour hire • Interstate consultants and contractors employed in relation to roll out of smart meters • Failure and costs of replacement of asbestos water mains in Palmerston • Focus for early careers pathways given move to renewables • Progress of underground power project in Darwin, expenditure to date and anticipated completion date
<p>Jacana Energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average quarterly power bill for residential customers • Number of residential customers currently overdue on their power bills and number of customers on payment plans • Main drivers in forecasted increase in revenue • Power purchase agreements with solar facilities and amount purchased during reporting period • Number of complaints regarding increases in power bills due to roll out of smart meters and how to assist customers • Number of customers still on grandfathered feed-in tariff, expenditure on feed-in tariff, and amount of electricity purchased from customers • Impact of gas curtailment on Jacana Energy • Percentage of market held by Jacana Energy • Customer complaints process

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Territory Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of a system black due to a lack of gas or mechanical failures • Impact of gas curtailment on Territory Generation • Reduction in gas usage by region • Current net debt compared to last financial year, anticipated borrowings for this financial, year and forecast for the forward estimates • Estimated interest expense this financial year • Projected expected cost of BESS1, anticipated commissioning timeframe, and repairs and maintenance budget • Investment in large scale solar and power purchase agreements • Spinning reserve required to compensate for input of solar energy • Forecast increase in behind the meter solar and large-scale solar systems • Expenditure on diesel in the last financial year • Estimated end of life for Ron Goodwin power station • Alice Springs Future Grid Road Map • Cost to produce statement of corporate intent • Budgeted and actual capital expenditure • Projected budget for battery technology over the next 3 years • Capacity to deliver on and expend capital budget • Asset management plan for replacement of machines • Upskilling of employees to operate and maintain the BESS • Expenditure on contractors • Firming arrangements with solar facilities • Number of FTEs and position vacancies • Legal actions and contingent liabilities • Repairs and maintenance budget • Implementation of recommendations from report on Code Black in Alice Springs • Repairs and maintenance of Owen Springs power station • Delivery of electricity to Alice Springs Space Base project • Supply of electricity to the Tennant Creek grid • Depreciation of assets
Speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of membership of the Standing Committee on the ICAC • Cost of security services • Assessments and roll out of security system upgrades to electorate offices • Instances and cost of criminal damage to electorate offices in reporting period • Breaches of electorate office security during reporting period • Security upgrades to electorate offices during reporting period and cost • Plans for the space in Parliament House currently occupied by Libraries NT

PORTFOLIO	AREAS OF QUESTIONING
Speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans to celebrate 50th Anniversary of the first sittings of the Legislative Assembly • Cost of installing electric vehicle charging station in the Members' car park and applicability of fringe benefits tax • Number of times public galleries have been closed during the reporting period • Communication of security issues to MLAs, other building occupants and visitors in the building • Expenditure of variation in building management services budget

Ms Natasha Fyles MLA
CHAIR

Dissenting Report - 2024 NT BUDGET ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

20th June 2024

Robyn Lambley

Member for Araluen

The 2024 Budget Estimates Committee sat from Tuesday 11th June to 20th June 2024.

Budget Estimates Hearings are the ultimate opportunity for non-Government members to scrutinise the operation and financial management of Ministers and their Government agencies. One by one Ministers present themselves to the Committee to answer questions.

The Makeup of the Budget Estimates Committee

With multiple leadership changes and reshuffles over the past 12 months we saw a situation not seen before, a Budget Estimates Committee controlled and operated by three former Ministers including a former Chief Minister and her former Deputy Chief Minister.

This year the Budget Estimates Committee was chaired by the former Chief Minister, Natasha Fyles. Her former Deputy Chief Minister, Nicole Manison, was the Deputy Chair of the Committee with former Minister, Paul Kirby, as the third Government member. The two other members of the Committee were CLP Member for Namatjira, Bill Yan, and the Independent Member for Araluen, Robyn Lambley. Both Fyles and Manison stepped down from their Ministerial positions in December 2023, just 6 months ago.

The ethics and optics around three former Government Ministers operating and controlling the scrutiny of Government is unethical and unacceptable. The Government, through their Government members on the Budget Estimates Committee, effectively controlled what could and could not be asked of Ministers and Senior Public Servants.

The Member for Nightcliff, Member for Wanguri and the Member for Port Darwin had serious Conflicts of Interest, which was not adequately addressed or acknowledged throughout the whole Budget Estimates proceedings. The requirement under the Westminster Parliamentary system is that the work of Parliamentary Committees, including Budget Estimates Committees, be undertaken in a fair and democratic manner was not adhered to because of the way in which the makeup of this Committee was stacked by the Government.

Two 14½ Hour Days

Two days (18th and 19th June) of Budget Estimates Hearings went for 14½ hours, from 8am to 10.30pm. The expectation of the Government, that direct and control the proceedings, was that Committee Members and staff of the Legislative Assembly work for this extended period for two consecutive days. There is no reason for this. It is particularly unfair on the Legislative Assembly staff.

Consideration should be given to not only capping the number of hours Ministers can front the committee at 8 hours, but also the number of hours the Committee can sit on any one day to 8 hours.



ROBYN LAMBLEY MLA